

1 MR. TOM COOK, JR.

2  
3 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Mr. Tom Cook, Jr.

4 MR. COOK: Good afternoon. My name is Tom Cook and  
5 I'm here to tell you a success story resulting from the presence  
6 of riverboat gaming in Illinois.

7 I am chief executive officer of D.O. Cook Electric  
8 Company which I founded in 1993 and which currently employs 40  
9 full time union electricians, estimators and project managers in  
10 addition to a full time office staff of 12. Four years ago I was  
11 one of a group of electricians in Aurora Union Hall waiting to be  
12 assigned work. Fortunately I was recommended as electrical  
13 foreman to supervise the 150 union electricians needed to build  
14 Hollywood Casino Aurora's two vessels.

15 Within eight months the riverboats were complete and  
16 Hollywood City of Lights I and II were up and running. From that  
17 day on, my phone never stopped ringing. Due to the ongoing work  
18 on the vessels, where just about everything is electrical,  
19 including the slot machines, lights, surveillance cameras, change  
20 machines and player tracking devices, to name a few, I was  
21 working as an independent contractor 12 to 15 hours a day, six  
22 days a week. A friend suggested that I take the next step for an  
23 independent contractor and incorporate my business. There was so  
24 much ongoing work at Hollywood that very shortly after I  
25 incorporated, I hired my first electrician just so I could keep  
26 up.

27 My biggest break came after about a year and a half,  
28 when Hollywood decided to expand its City of Lights I vessel.  
29 Because I had been part of their project from the ground up, they

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1 really wanted me to work on the expansion. They also understood  
2 that as a new business I had limited resources relative to the  
3 project and arranged the payment schedules so that my company  
4 could receive weekly, rather than customary monthly payouts.  
5 This enabled us to have a sufficient cash flow to pay the  
6 electricians I needed to hire and purchase the equipment  
7 necessary to do a job that size.

8 City of Lights I expansion was a \$3 million job that  
9 really put us on the map. The first thing it did was help us  
10 establish our credit worthiness, but the most important thing the  
11 project did was to give us the opportunity to make a name for  
12 ourselves in the industry. A lot of general contractors saw the  
13 work we did and knew who the client was. What that meant for us  
14 was that within a very short period of time we established big  
15 time credibility in a highly competitive industry.

16 In the last four years I have done a Super Wal-Mart,  
17 schools and office buildings. We recently spun off two  
18 additional divisions, a nationally franchised residential service  
19 division and a voice data division. That division was hired by  
20 Chicago's landmark Merchandise Mart to pull the fiber optic lines  
21 for high speed data service and was employed by the city of  
22 Chicago in the underground freight tunnel system to complete 1.5  
23 miles of electrical conduit work.

24 As a result of Hollywood casino corporations coming  
25 to Aurora, I went in an unbelievably short period of time from  
26 being a blue collar worker to being a successful corporate chief  
27 executive officer. I hope you will consider my good news story  
28 in your continuing deliberations. Thank you.

29 CHAIRMAN JAMES: Thank you very much.

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